

1. A method of notifying a subscriber to a content provider of activity in a subscriber rental queue associated with the subscriber, including the steps of:
 - a. defining a set of notification rules for the subscriber rental queue, which notification rules are authorized by the subscriber;
 - b. monitoring the subscriber rental queue in accordance with said set of notification rules and a separate set of queue replenishment control rules authorized by the subscriber to determine if a composition and/or ordering of playable media titles in the subscriber rental queue should be altered;
 - c. sending a notification to the subscriber in response to an affirmative determination under step (b) that such notification is necessary based on said set of notification rules.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein said notification does not automatically trigger a modification of the subscriber rental queue.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein said notification specifies that the subscriber rental queue will be automatically modified in accordance with said separate set of queue replenishment control rules.
4. The method of claim 1, wherein the subscriber delivery queue is automatically modified in accordance with said separate set of queue replenishment control rules after a predefined time delay.
5. The method of claim 1, wherein said notification provides directions for the subscriber to accept and/or modify any proposed alterations of the subscriber rental queue.
6. The method of claim 1, wherein said queue replenishment control rules include a trigger event to be used in determining when said subscriber rental queue should be modified.
7. The method of claim 6, wherein said trigger event is associated with a quantity of playable media items remaining in the subscriber rental queue.
8. The method of claim 6, wherein said trigger event is associated with a determination by an item recommendation system that an additional playable media item should be added to the subscriber rental queue as a recommended playable media item.

9. The method of claim 8, wherein said recommended playable media item is designated as the next to be delivered to the subscriber.
10. The method of claim 1, wherein any proposed altering of said composition and/or ordering of playable media titles in the subscriber rental queue is automatically determined by a recommender system controlled by the content provider, which recommender system automatically identifies playable media items of interest to the subscriber based on a subscriber item preference profile.
11. The method of claim 10, further including a step of: processing an item rating survey provided by the subscriber to determine a subscriber item preference profile suitable for use by said recommender system.
12. The method of claim 1, further including a step of: receiving subscriber feedback concerning a performance of the content provider concerning selection of an additional playable media item.
13. The method of claim 1, wherein the subscriber can elect to receive no notification even when a composition and/or ordering of playable media titles in the subscriber rental queue are altered.
14. The method of claim 1, wherein said playable media titles are movies distributed by a satellite transmission to a satellite signal receiver.
15. The method of claim 1, wherein said playable media titles are movies distributed on a DVD.
16. The method of claim 1, wherein said said playable media titles are movies distributed by a broadband Internet-based connection.
17. The method of claim 1, wherein said notification includes an indication of a status of the subscriber rental queue.
18. The method of claim 1, wherein said notification includes an identification of an additional playable media item which is being added to the subscriber rental queue.

19. A method of distributing playable media items over an electronic network to a subscriber of a media rental service, the method comprising the steps of:
- (a) receiving subscriber preference data for the subscriber during a first data session,
5 including notification and shipment options;
 - (b) generating a subscriber profile for the subscriber suitable for use by a recommender system;
 - (c) processing said subscriber profile using said recommender system to identify a media item that is likely to be of interest to the subscriber ;
 - 10 (d) notifying the subscriber and shipping said media item to the subscriber in accordance with said subscriber preference data;
- wherein said media item can be automatically shipped to the subscriber after said first data session, and without requiring a second data session by the subscriber with said media rental service.

20. A rental service system for distributing playable media items to a subscriber using a subscriber rental queue, the system comprising:

- (a) a subscriber preference routine for capturing subscriber preference data from the subscriber during a first data session, said subscriber preference data including a set of notification rules for the subscriber rental queue, and a separate set of queue replenishment control rules;
- (b) a subscriber selection routine for storing titles of one or more playable media items in the subscriber rental queue;
- (c) a subscriber queue monitoring routine configured for managing the subscriber rental queue in accordance with said queue replenishment control options;
wherein said subscriber queue monitoring routine can optionally automatically add one or more additional titles to the subscriber rental queue and without additional subscriber input;
- (d) a subscriber notification routine for providing a notice to the subscriber in accordance with said set of notification rules and in response to said subscriber queue monitoring routine determining that one or more additional titles should be added to said subscriber rental queue.